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TEXTUALIZATION ACROSS MEDIA: A CASE STUDY BASED ON PERSON REFERENCE FROM TALK-IN-INTERACTION TO EPIGRAPHIC DATA

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Abstract

Although there may be some significant differences between oral discourse and written discourse, this article explores the similarities of how textualization can occur across media, from everyday conversation to literature, with special reference to the cognitive-linguistic practices associated with person reference. It begins with observations taken from conversation analysis to understand the basic practices of person reference in talk-in-interaction, *including* the preference for achieving recognition and the preference for minimalization. It then provides two examples of person reference in written material culture: (1) *bullae* A and B from excavations at Lachish, which contain two Hebrew names translated as "Eliakim, (son of) Yehozarah"; and (2) a discussion of text-critical variants concerning person reference in 2 Samuel 3:23–25 and in 2 Kings 24:18//Jeremiah 52:1. This analysis leads to the following conclusion: for successful communication to occur, textualization requires some level of co-cultural knowledge between speakers/writers and hearers/readers in ways that requires the speakers/writers to make certain assumptions about the co-cultural knowledge of the hearers/readers and design their speech/writing accordingly. Therefore, any particular example of textualization should not be understood as explicitly containing all of the information shared between speakers/writers and hearers/readers. This article ends with reflections on the implications of this conclusion on understanding both individual manuscripts of ancient literature and the text-critical "variants" between manuscripts of the "same" literary text as examples of textualization within textual plurality, a characteristic of ancient literature.

Bien qu'il puisse y avoir des différences significatives entre le discours oral et le discours écrit, cet article explore les similitudes de la textualisation à travers différents médias, de la conversation quotidienne à la littérature, en se référant particulièrement aux pratiques cognitivo-linguistiques associées à la référence aux personnes.

Il commence par des observations tirées de l'analyse de conversation pour comprendre les pratiques de base de la référence aux personnes dans les interactions parlées, y compris la préférence pour obtenir la reconnaissance et la préférence pour la minimisation. Il fournit ensuite deux exemples de référence aux personnes dans la culture matérielle écrite : (1) les bulles A et B des fouilles de Lakish, qui contiennent deux noms hébreux traduits par « Éliakim, (fils de) Yehozarah » ; et (2) une discussion sur les variantes textuelles concernant la référence aux personnes dans 2 Samuel 3:23-25 et dans 2 Rois 24:18//Jérémie 52:1. Cette analyse mène à la conclusion suivante : pour qu'une communication réussie ait lieu, la textualisation nécessite un certain niveau de connaissance co-culturelle entre les locuteurs/auteurs et les auditeurs/lecteurs de manière à ce que les locuteurs/auteurs fassent certaines hypothèses sur les connaissances co-culturelles des auditeurs/lecteurs et conçoivent leur discours/écriture en conséquence. Par conséquent, tout exemple particulier de textualisation ne doit pas être compris comme contenant explicitement toutes les informations partagées entre les locuteurs/auteurs et les auditeurs/lecteurs. Cet article se termine par des réflexions sur les implications de cette conclusion pour la compréhension à la fois des manuscrits individuels de la littérature ancienne et des « variantes » textuelles entre les manuscrits du « même » texte littéraire en tant qu'exemples de textualisation au sein de la pluralité textuelle, une caractéristique de la littérature ancienne.

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Raymond F. Person, Jr.

Introduction

I accept the premise of conversation analysis that face-to-face talk-in-interaction is the most basic form of language,[1] so I want to briefly summarize John Heritage's important work on epistemics in conversation to provide important background information for my argument.[2]

[1] This article is a revision of a paper I gave at the Fourteenth Conference on Orality and Literacy in the Ancient World with the theme "textualization" hosted by The Hebrew University of Jerusalem from June 20–23, 2021. I want to thank the other attendees for their feedback and especially Margalit Finkelberg, Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz, and Donna Shalev, the conference organizers.

[2] For those unfamiliar with conversation analysis, I recommend the following: Hutchby and Wooffitt 2008; Sidnell and Stivers 2013.

In two 2012 articles, Heritage asserted that talk-in-interaction not only draws from shared knowledge between the participants, but also serves the purpose of reducing the imbalance of knowledge between the participants. That is, he demonstrated that "territories of knowledge," especially when there is "an imbalance of information between speaker and hearer," are often the engine that drives talk-in-interaction and that, when that imbalance has been equalized, the topic for that particular sequence of conversation has run its course and generally comes to an end (Heritage 2012a; Heritage 2012b).[3]

I assert that all forms of language are texts in that participants (including speakers/hearers and writers/readers) can refer to the talk/epigraphic object in future social actions. Furthermore, despite differences between oral and written discourse, all texts assume some co-cultural or shared knowledge as they also may impart new information. My assertion assumes the basic premise concerning epistemics as described by Heritage, even as I describe how written texts adapt practices from everyday conversation.[4] I will argue that for successful communication to occur, textualization requires some level of co-cultural knowledge between speakers and writers, on the one hand, and hearers and readers, on the other, in ways that requires the speakers and writers to make certain assumptions about the co-cultural knowledge of the hearers and readers and to design their speech and writing accordingly; therefore, any particular example of textualization, including manuscripts of literary texts, should not be understood as explicitly containing all of the information shared between speakers/writers and hearers/readers. I will use person reference as my case study, looking at three different types of texts: an extract from a telephone conversation, two *bullae* or seal impressions, and text-critical "variants" in two biblical passages (2 Sam 3:23–25 and 2 Kgs 24:18//Jer 52:1). The article ends with my reflections on the implications of this conclusion for our understanding of what can justifiably be understood as one of the most literate forms

[3] For an excellent review of the recent discussion of epistemics within conversation analysis, see Heritage 2014.

[4] For my most thorough discussion of how "literary" characteristics (including in oral traditions) adapt conversational practices, see Person 2016.

of textualization in antiquity—that is, when a scribe copied a *Vorlage* to produce a new manuscript of the "same" literary work that often contained "variants." Thus, this article builds upon arguments made in *Scribal Memory and Word Selection: Text Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Person 2023), in which I argue that the ideas of "original text" and "variants" are anachronistic, especially in light of the characteristics of textual fluidity and textual plurality evident in late Second Temple literature. Nevertheless, here I provide an example of a "variant" for which we can discern which reading might be earlier (2 Kgs 24:18//Jer 52:1).

Person Reference in Conversation

I begin my discussion of person reference in everyday conversation with a quote from an early study in conversation analysis by Harvey Sacks and Emanuel Schegloff:

> For reference to any person, there is a large set of reference forms that can do the work of referring to that one (e.g., he, Joe, a guy, my uncle, someone, Harry's cousin, the dentist, the man who came to dinner, et cetera). (Sacks and Schegloff 1979, 16–17)

In this quote, they note that we have multiple ways to refer to third-party non-present persons, which can be seen as a problem that needs to be solved: which particular person reference should someone choose in any given context? Conversation analysts have identified two preferences that help us solve this problem: the preference for achieving recognition and the preference for minimalization. The preference for recognition has been described as follows:

> Referring expressions are designed to achieve recognition: They evidence the broader underlying principle of recipient design by which speakers make use of a referential form that should enable their recipients to link a referring expression with a real person. (Stivers et al. 2007, 12–13)

In short, there must be enough information in the person reference so that the other participant in the conversation can identify who the speaker is referring to. The preference for recognition is universally primary and must be met for successful communication. The preference for minimalization has been described as follows: “On occasions when reference is to be done, it should preferably be done with a single reference form” (Sacks and Schegloff 1979, 16)—that is, this secondary preference emphasizes economy in the process of recognition.

Furthermore, we need to make a distinction between “locally initial” and “locally subsequent” positions and forms (Schegloff 1996)—that is, the first time someone is referred to in a conversation (the locally initial position), a locally initial form often provides adequate recognition, so that, in English, a proper name is generally used. However, in later references to the same person (locally subsequent positions), a locally subsequent form can be minimal, so that, in English, for example, pronouns are generally used. Even though we can identify locally initial and locally subsequent forms based on general use, these are not hard-and-fast rules, so that, for example, in some situations a locally subsequent form may occur in a locally initial position. This situation is illustrated by Example 1 from a phone conversation between two college friends with the pseudonyms Nancy and Hyla:

Example 1

01	Nan:	You don’t want to see his forty year old?
02	Hyl:	hhhhhhh. U:h- uh k .hhhh I can live without her,
03		°.hhhhhh
04		(0.2)
05	Hyl:	That’s alright,
06	Nan:	uh Oh::,
07		(.)
08	Hyl:	[Bu: t]
09	Nan:	[My f]:ace hurts,=
10	Hyl:	=°W’t-° (.) Oh: what’d’e do to you.
11		(.)
12	Nan:	↑GOD’e just (>) pracally killed my dumb fa:ce,=
13	Hyl:	=Why: Ho [=ow.]
14	Nan:	[(With,)] (.) with this thing I don’ ee I
15		wasn’t even looking I don’t kno::w,
16		(.)

17 Nan: But 'e just like o:pened up, (0.6) a lo:ot y'know 'v
18 (0.4) the pimples I ha:ve¿=
19 Hyl: =Eoh::,

(Kitzinger et al. 2012, 26)

In line 5, Hyla brings the previous topic to a close. Lines 6–7 suggest a brief pause between topics. Lines 8 and 9 occur at the same time (denoted by the brackets), so that in line 8 Hyla may be returning to the previous topic, but Nancy's "My face hurts" in line 9 introduces a new topic. Hyla's response in line 10 is at first "What" followed by "Oh" denoting that she now understands the topic. Note that Hyla introduces a person reference here that is a locally subsequent form, "What did **he** do to you?" Who is he? As outsiders, we might imagine other possibilities (for example, an abusive boyfriend), because the pronoun does not appear to provide adequate recognition; however, in the fuller transcript it becomes clear that Hyla knew that Nancy had recently gone to a dermatologist and correctly assumed that that visit was the source of her face hurting. This is one of those somewhat unusual cases that Celia Kitzinger et al.(2012) have identified as "locally initial indexicals"—that is, a locally subsequent form used in a locally initial position that nevertheless achieves recognition because of the co-cultural knowledge between the two participants. They described this example as follows: "By selecting the indexical, rather than his name (if she knows it) or a descriptor such as 'your dermatologist,' Hyla trades on—and claims access to—shared knowledge about the dermatologist" (Kitzinger et al. 2012, 126). In short, Hyla could provide the initial person reference to the dermatologist with a minimal form that nevertheless achieves recognition, because she produces her person reference according to audience design—that is, Nancy obviously knows who is responsible for her face hurting.

Person Reference in *Bullae* A and B from Lachish

Figure 1. *Bulla* A. (Photo by T. Rogovski; courtesy of The Fourth Expedition to Lachish)

Figure 2. *Bulla* A. (Line drawing by A. Yardeni; courtesy of The Fourth Expedition to Lachish)

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Figure 3. *Bulla* B. (Photo by T. Rogovski; courtesy of The Fourth Expedition to Lachish)

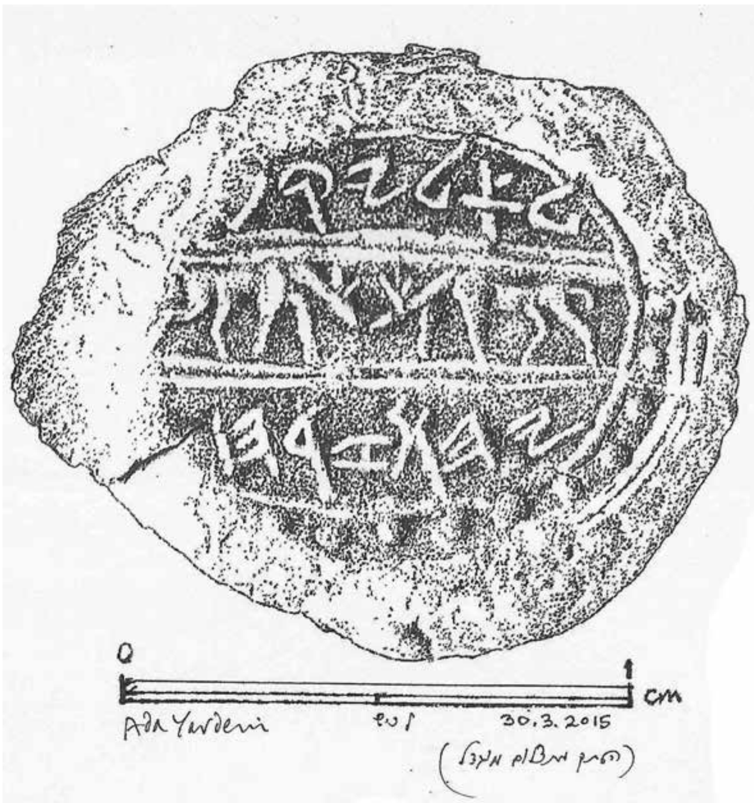

Figure 4. *Bulla* B. (Line drawing by A. Yardeni; courtesy of The Fourth Expedition to Lachish)

Now I want to assert that much the same thing is the case with *bullae* A and B from Lachish. These were found in the 2014 season of excavations at Lachish in Level III, a destruction layer associated with the campaign by Sennacherib, King of Assyria, in 701 BCE (Figs 1–4).[5] These *bullae* come from the same seal, and on the back side you can see the depressions made by the strings when the clay was applied to a roll of papyrus. The *bullae* include two lines of Hebrew written in a script typical of the eighth century BCE with one name on each line that reads: "belonging to Eliakim, (son of) Yehozarah" (in square script: לאליקם יהוזרח) separated by an iconographic depiction of two does facing each other.

The excavation directors concluded the following concerning their interpretation of the writing on the bullae:

> Thus, it is possible that Bullae A and B … stem from the personal seal of Eliakim the Royal Steward in the time of Hezekiah (according to 2 Kgs 18:18), son of Yehozarah (not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible but on the bulla from the Israel Museum) and grandson of Hilkiah (also mentioned in 2 Kgs 18:18). (Klingbeil et al. 2019, 48)

In 2 Kings 18:18, we find a reference to "Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace" (NRSV). A bulla in the collection of the Israel Museum belonged to "Yehozarah, son of Hilqiyahu [Hilkiah], servant of Hizqiyahu [Hezekiah]" (Klingbeil et al. 2019, 48). Their interpretation notes that in the Hebrew Bible בן ("son of") can mean "grandson of," so that they propose this reading of 2 Kings 18:18 ("Eliakim, grandson of Hilkiah") as a way of reconciling what at first appears to be an inconsistency among the three sources of historical biographical information.

What I want us to notice is that they have essentially reconstructed the shared knowledge necessary for a fuller recognition of "Eliakim." That is, assuming that their interpretation is valid, anyone in ancient Lachish reading these *bullae* would have likely known more about

[5] These figures are used with permission of the co-directors of The Fourth Expedition to Lachish, 2013–2017: Martin Klingbeil, Yosef Garfinkel, and Michael Hasel. I thank them for providing me with these figures that are also published in Klingbeil et al. 2019, 44–45.

"Eliakim" than these two Hebrew names suggest, including his title (Royal Steward) and other ancestors (Hilkiah). Presumably, their historical elaboration is simply making explicit for us moderns what would have been co-cultural knowledge to the ancients associated with the text on the papyrus rolls and for whom recognition was achieved with "Eliakim, (son of) Yehozarah" on the *bullae*.

Person Reference in Text-Critical "Variants"

Here I repeat the quote from Sacks and Schegloff I gave above: "For reference to any person, there is a large set of reference forms that can do the work of referring to that one" (1979, 16–17), because this remains the case in the composition/transmission process of ancient literature, not simply in conversation. This is most obvious when we consider how often "variants" may occur in the extant manuscript evidence related to person reference. Although others assume that "variants" are the result of "scribal errors" or theologically motivated revisions, I have argued that these "variants" are best understood (at least, in the majority of cases) as "synonymous readings," an idea I borrow from Shemaryahu Talmon even though I have significantly expanded its application (Person 2023). Here, I am simply concerned about the cognitive-linguistic mechanisms that are operative in *Vorlage*-based "copying"—that is, how are words selected by scribes as they "copy" a manuscript physically present to them into the new manuscript that they are producing in ways that nevertheless allow for textual fluidity and textual plurality as characteristic of the composition/transmission process, rather than aberrations of the "copying" process? Below, I provide a discussion of a set of text-critical "variants" in 2 Samuel 3:23–25 and one "variant" in 2 Kings 24:18// Jeremiah 52:1.

Concerning the text-critical "variants" in 2 Samuel 3:23–25, I provide the text in Hebrew of the Masoretic Text (MT) and one of the Dead Sea Scrolls (4QSam^{a}) and the Greek of Codex Vaticanus of the Septuagint (LXX^{B}) with English translations, and then I provide a list of the "variants" in this passage related to person reference (also bolded in the

English translation).[6] This order should not be assumed to represent any conclusion about which "variant" is "original" or even "earlier." In the first "variant" concerning Abner, I also provide the Greek variant reading from the Lucianic recension of Samuel (LXX[L]).

Example 2

2 Sam 3:23–25

MT ויואב וכל הצבא אשר אתו באו ויגדו ליואב לאמר בא אבנר בן נר
אל המלך וישלחהו וילך בשלום ויבא יואב אל המלך ויאמר מה עשיתה
הנה בא אבנר אליך למה זה שלחתו וילך הלוך ידעת את אבנר בן נר
כי לפתתך בא ולדעת את מוצאך ואת מבואך ולדעת את כל אשר אתה עשה

When Joab and all the army that was with him came, it was reported to Joab, "Abner son of Ner came to **the king**, and he has dismissed him, and he has gone away in peace." Then Joab went to the king and said, "What have you done? Behold, **Abner** came to you; why did you dismiss him, so that he surely got away? You know that **Abner son of Ner** came to deceive you, and to learn your comings and goings and to learn all that you do."

4QSam[a] בן נר אל דויד וישלחהו וילך [בשלום ויבוא יואב אל המלך ויאמר מה]
עשיתה הן בא אבנר אליך למה זה [שלחתו וילך הלוא ידעת את]
אבנר כי הלפתותך [בא ולדעת את מוצאך ואת מבואך לדעת את]
כול אשר אתה עושה [vacat]

"Son of Ner came to **David**, and he has dismissed him, and he has gone away [in peace." 24 Then Joab went to the king and said, "What] have you done? Behold, **Abner** came to you; why did you [dismiss him, so that he surely got away? You know that] **Abner** [came] to deceive you, [and to learn your comings and goings and to learn] all that you do."

LXX[B] καὶ Ιωαβ καὶ πᾶσα ἡ στρατιὰ αὐτοῦ ἤχθησαν, καὶ ἀπηγγέλη τῷ Ιωαβ λέγοντες Ἥκει Αβεννηρ υἱὸς Νηρ πρὸς Δαυιδ, καὶ ἀπέσταλκεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἐν εἰρήνῃ. καὶ εἰσῆλθεν

[6] The Hebrew text for MT comes from *BHS*; the Hebrew text for 4QSam[a] comes from Cross et al. 2005; and the Greek for LXX[B] and LXX[L] comes from Brooke et al. 1927.

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Ιωαβ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα καὶ εἶπεν Τί τοῦτο ἐποίησας; ἰδοὺ ἦλθεν Αβεννηρ πρὸς σέ, καὶ ἵνα τί ἐξαπεσταλκας αὐτὸν καὶ ἀπελήλυθεν ἐν εἰρήνῃ; ἢ οὐκ οἶδας τὴν κακίαν Αβεννηρ υἱοῦ Νηρ, ὅτι ἀπατῆσαί σε παρεγένετο καὶ γνῶναι τὴν ἔξοδόν σου καὶ τὴν εἴσοδόν σου καὶ γνῶναι ἅπαντα, ὅσα σὺ ποιεῖς;

[23]When Joab and all the army that was with him came, it was reported to Joab, "Abner son of Ner came to **David**, and he has dismissed him, and he has gone away in peace." [24]Then Joab went to the king and said, "What have you done? Behold, **Abner** came to you; why did you dismiss him, so that he got away in peace? [25]Do you not know about the evil of **Abner son of Ner**, that he came to deceive you and to learn your goings and comings, all that you do?"

MT: המלך: the king
4QSam[a]: דויד: David
LXX[B]: Δαυιδ = דויד: David

MT: אבנר: Abner
4QSam[a]: אבנר: Abner
LXX[B]: Αβεννηρ = אבנר: Abner
LXX[L]: Αβεννηρ υἱοῦ Νηρ = אבנר בן נר: Abner son of Ner

MT: אבנר בן נר: Abner son of Ner
4QSam[a]: אבנר: Abner
LXX[B]: Αβεννηρ υἱοῦ Νηρ = אבנר בן נר: Abner son of Ner

Before discussing the "variants," we should note that within their literary contexts these "variants" are not unique—that is, in the text where there is complete agreement between these versions, each of these "variants" are found. Also, the order given for the "variants" should not be understood as indicating priority related to any purported "original text," especially since I reject the very idea of an "original text" as anachronistic for ancient literary texts.[7] Rather, I provide the reading from

[7] This example is taken from Person 2023. In this monograph, I provide further rationale concerning my theoretical approach combining the study of talk within conversation analysis with "variants" in text criticism, my rejection of the idea of an "original text," discussion of many other text-critical "variants" (including

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the MT first simply because it is the "received" text, then provide the reading from one of the Samuel manuscripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and lastly the Septuagint reading.

In these three verses alone, David is referred to as "David," "the king," the third person singular pronoun embedded within the verb, and the second person singular pronoun. In v. 23, we have the variation between "the king" in MT and "David" in 4QSam[a] and LXX.

In these three verses alone, Abner is referred to by "Abner, son of Ner," "Abner," the third person singular pronoun, and the third person singular pronoun embedded within the verb. In v. 23, we have the variation between "Abner, son of Ner" in LXX[L] and "Abner" in MT, 4QSam[a], and LXX[B]. In v. 25, we have the variation between "Abner, son of Ner" in MT and LXX and "Abner" in 4QSam[a].

In *Scribal Memory and Word Selection* (Person 2023), I assert that, when ancient scribes copied a physical manuscript before them to produce a new manuscript, they drew from their co-cultural knowledge as they "copied" the manuscript in ways that allow for variation from the exact words in the *Vorlage*, but the vast majority of "variants" are nevertheless synonymous readings so that even when the scribes produced a manuscript with different lexemes (so-called "variants") they really had not changed a thing. Extending the idea of scribal performance, I use the idea of scribal memory as the label for this co-cultural knowledge that influenced the composition/transmission process. Combining and paraphrasing quotes from Alger Doane (1994, 435–36) and Jonathan Ready (2019, 213–14) on scribal performance and Alan Kirk (2008, 219) and Shem Miller (2019, 265) on scribal memory, I described the copying process as follows:

> Performing scribes transmitted a living tradition to their contemporary audience as they exercised their scribal memory while copying their *Vorlagen*. Scribes never stopped performing. Whether they were sticking to their *Vorlagen* or departing from them, their *Vorlagen* were ancillary—that is, visual, material supports for the primary existence and transmission of the literary texts in the medium of memory. When

others related to person reference), and a proposal for a cognitive-linguistic mechanism for word selection based especially on Jefferson 1996.

> performing their texts, they drew not only from the *Vorlagen* physically present before them, but also from those *Vorlagen* that existed within scribal memory, which included traditional associations of words and traditional interpretations of literary texts. When scribes copied their *Vorlagen* into new manuscripts; written texts, traditional texts, and performed texts all interfaced with one another in the mind of the scribes in ways that often produced what we understand as "variants," but for them are simply alternative attestations of tradition and performance. (Person 2023, 36–37)

The ideas of scribal performance and scribal memory are clearly an extension of Albert Lord's insight concerning performance in oral traditions: "We cannot correctly speak of a 'variant,' since there is no 'original' to be varied" (1960, 101).

To return to the "variants" concerning person reference in 2 Samuel 3:23–25, I should be more explicit about how I think oral traditions and literature with roots in oral tradition differ from everyday conversation concerning person reference. In any talk-in-progress, the sequence of turns is not yet decided and each speaker is producing their turns-at-talk within the ongoing context of the conversation. In contrast, the transmission of traditional literature like the Hebrew Bible occurs in communities in which not only the scribes who were copying a manuscript knew the literary text as preserved in scribal memory (including preserved partially in the *Vorlage* before them), but in the collective memory of the scribes' audiences as well. Therefore, the sequential character of conversation is not as strong in traditional literature.

Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that every reading of a scroll would start at the beginning of the manuscript, thereby creating different locally initial readings based on where the scribe began to read. In the terminology of conversation analysis, the distinction between locally initial and locally subsequent locations becomes less important. Moreover, familiarity with the literary text makes recognition of the literary characters easier to achieve. Nevertheless, a certain degree of what in conversation are locally initial forms (most importantly, personal names) is necessary for the social function of the traditional literature in defining the community and its identity, especially in the education of children or initiates into the community. Therefore, even though recognition may be achieved more easily for those most familiar with the literature, the educational purpose of traditional literature to socialize suggests that a minimal approach to all person references may prove problematic. Based on the observation that person reference in the Hebrew Bible is often a location for variation between the extant manuscript traditions, it seems that textual plurality and textual fluidity in scribal performance allows for significant variation in the copying of manuscripts with regard to person reference. Although recognition of traditional characters may be easier to achieve and there is in some sense no locally initial location, the exclusive use of the most minimal forms (typically subsequent forms, such as pronouns) would undercut recognition, especially for those in the community who are the most unfamiliar with the texts—that is, those whose epistemic status with regard to the literature is among the lowest. Therefore, the initial forms can appear in various locations within the literature, so that what we perceive as "variants" can occur in relationship to a certain percentage of person reference terms within a given passage.

Individual scribes may have differing tendencies related to the selection of person reference terms based on their assumptions concerning their audience's epistemic status and therefore their own epistemic stance in relationship to the perceived epistemic status of their audience. Some scribes may assume a high epistemic status for their audience and therefore be more prone to omit the more explicit terms of person reference. Some scribes may assume a low epistemic status for their audience and therefore be more prone to add terms of person reference to facilitate better recognition. Of course, the same scribe may make one assumption for one audience when copying one text and another assumption for the same or another audience when copying another text.

Because of what seem to be competing/conflicting tendencies based on the preferences for recognition and minimalization in the text-critical evidence, I think that it is probably best to assume that variants related to person reference are generally understood as synonymous readings. For example, "David" and "the king" in 2 Samuel 3:23 are synonymous readings and as such both should be treated as "original" and

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"authentic."[8] That is, although I do not discount that scribes sometimes made changes to a text for ideological reasons, I think that we, modern scholars, too often assume that that is the case, based on a presumed "original" text with ideological changes made by later scribes. However, once we accept textual plurality and textual fluidity in the context of scribal performance and scribal memory, we have little (if any) methodological basis to establish "early" from "late" readings much less what is "original."[9]

Despite my continuing insistence that we have little methodological basis to distinguish "early" from "late" readings, I will now discuss one such exception in the determination of an earlier and later reading pertaining to person reference. Nevertheless, this exception helps illustrate the notion of synonymous readings at the same time that it makes use of the observations from conversation analysis to person reference, specifically the preference for recognition and the preference for minimalization. This example comes from a comparison of MT 2 Kings 24:18 and LXX 2 Kings 24:18 and its parallels in MT Jeremiah 52:1 and LXX Jeremiah 52:1.[10] Here, I simply provide the "variants" from these four texts:

[8] Shemaryahu Talmon first applied the term "synonymous reading" to text-critical variants in the Hebrew Bible. See Talmon 1961. For further discussion of synonymous readings in the Hebrew Bible, see Person 2023. For my discussion of synonymous readings not only in the Hebrew Bible but also the New Testament and Homer, see Person 2021.

[9] For my fuller critique of the efficacy of the current historical-critical methodology, see Person and Rezetko 2016; Person 2023, 304–10.

[10] The Hebrew text for MT comes from *BHS*; the Greek text for LXX 2 Kings 24:18 comes from Rahlfs 1979; and the Greek text for LXX Jeremiah 52:1 comes from Ziegler 1957. See Person 1997, 82, 97, 100, 103. In this work, I still assumed an "original text," so I would reach different conclusions concerning many of the "variants" I discussed then among MT 2 Kings 24:18–25:30; LXX 2 Kings 24:18–25:30; MT Jeremiah 52:1–30; and LXX Jeremiah 52:1–30. At that time, I was still operating under the assumptions of the consensus model and its methodologies. Nevertheless, I think that this specific example has some unique circumstances that increase the probably of determining which reading is earlier, even though these two "variants" should continue to be understood as synonymous readings.

Example 3

2 Kgs 24:18
MT: חמיטל בת ירמיהו מלבנה: Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah
LXX: Αμιτααλ θυγάτηρ Ιερεμιου = חמיטל בת ירמיהו: Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah

Jer 52:1
MT: חמיטל בת ירמיהו מלבנה: Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah
LXX: Αμιτααλ θυγάτηρ Ιερεμιου ἐκ Λοβενα = חמיטל בת ירמיהו מלבנה: Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah

First, I want to note that "Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah" and "Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah" are synonymous readings in that they both clearly point to Hamutal, who is identified earlier in this verse as Zedekiah's mother. Furthermore, "Jeremiah" and "Jeremiah of Libnah" are synonymous readings in that they both specify Hamutal's father. So the question becomes as follows: why was "of Libnah" added or omitted in this case in relationship to "Jeremiah." As has long been noted by commentators, Jeremiah 52 is a chapter that was copied from the book of Kings (2 Kgs 24:18–25:30)—that is, the original location for this passage was most likely the book of Kings, because its genre fits much better there than in the book of Jeremiah. Assuming this consensus, I have argued elsewhere that "of Libnah" was an addition made most likely at the time that 2 Kings 24:18–25:30 was copied into the book of Jeremiah as a way to clarify that Hamutal's father ("Jeremiah of Libnah") was not the prophet Jeremiah of the book of Jeremiah ("Jeremiah of Anathoth"; see Jer 29:27) as found in MT Jeremiah 52:1 and LXX Jeremiah 52:1. At a later time, this same "addition" was made in the book of Kings as found in MT 2 Kings 24:18 under the influence of Jeremiah 52:1.

Within 2 Kings 24:18–25:30//Jeremiah 52:1–30, there are many other "variants" related to person reference, sometimes as simple as a difference between "he" (indicating a leader) and "they" (indicating the leader and those he leads), that I would now interpret as synonymous readings as in the example of 2 Samuel 3:23–25 above.

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Therefore, LXX 2 Kings 24:18 has the earliest reading.[11] This conclusion is consistent with my current understanding of person reference. That is, the more minimal "Jeremiah" (as in LXX 2 Kgs 24:18) provided adequate representativity for recognition of Zedekiah's heritage, especially since here Jeremiah is not of central importance; however, the scribe who copied the text into the book of Jeremiah added "of Libnah" based on his co-cultural knowledge within his scribal memory as a way of insuring recognition of this "Jeremiah," not "Jeremiah of Anathoth," who is of central importance within the book of Jeremiah. Therefore, even though I think that we would have no basis methodologically to determine "early" from "late" if we only had these two readings in MT 2 Kings 24:18 and LXX 2 Kings 24:18, the fact that this passage was also used later in the book of Jeremiah provides us with a more objective basis for determining that "Jeremiah" was the earlier reading in 2 Kings 24:18 and the addition "of Libnah" likely entered the tradition after 2 Kings 24:18–25:30 was copied into the book of Jeremiah. Thus, although there remains no theological rationale behind this change, we can use what we know about person reference from conversation analysis to tip the balance in such a way that we can make a decision on the earlier reading. Nevertheless, when some later scribe of 2 Kings also added "of Libnah" (leading to MT), I think we can continue to argue that this would be understood by the ancients and should be understood by us moderns as a synonymous reading, one that may enable better the preference for recognition as the book of Jeremiah gains prominence, which necessarily overrides the preference for minimalization in some cases based on the scribes' assumptions concerning the epistemic status

[11] In Person 1997, I concluded that LXX 2 Kings 24:18 was the "original" reading. Here, I am avoiding "original" altogether, because I allow that, with the characteristic of textual fluidity and textual plurality for ancient texts, there was no single "original text"; therefore, there can be no single "original" reading—that is, I certainly allow that some early texts of the book of Kings could have had either reading before the passage was copied into the book of Jeremiah, so that the kind of unilinear argument I have given here remains problematic when applied to the vast majority of "variants" and even undercuts further any certainty I have with this conclusion now compared to when I wrote Person 1997.

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of their audience, which could be influenced by reusing a passage from one book in another book.

Conclusion

The examples I have discussed above all illustrate how the preference for recognition and the preference for minimalization are practices that influence textualization across media, from everyday conversation (at one extreme of the oral–literate continuum) to written texts, even in the *Vorlage*-based "copying" of manuscripts (at the other extreme). Furthermore, speakers and writers must take into account the epistemic status of their hearers and readers, in order to determine their own epistemic stance and how it influences their negotiation between these two preferences to produce adequate representativity. Because of co-cultural knowledge, Hyla can refer to Nancy's dermatologist in the initial person reference for him with the minimal pronoun "he" and the artisan who manufactured the seal that produced *bullae* A and B can refer to Hezekiah's Royal Steward simply as "Eliakim, (son of) Yehozarah." Moreover, both Hyla and the artisan can achieve recognition well of the non-present third person individuals in their targeted audiences—that is, "he" and "Eliakim, (son of) Yehozarah" are designated with their audiences' epistemic status in mind in ways that facilitate competent communication and also meet the secondary preference for minimalization. Somewhat similarly, because of scribal memory and the shared knowledge of the scribes' audiences, the two examples of text-critical "variants" illustrate that scribes in the process of producing new manuscripts based on *Vorlage*-based "copying" select terms of person reference based on their perceived understanding of their audiences' epistemic status. The various terms for David and Abner in 2 Samuel 3:23–25 provide competent recognition of these two characters; however, the fact that there is no consistent pattern we can discern related to the preference for minimalization within any one manuscript tradition demonstrates from yet another perspective how many ancient texts can be characterized by textual fluidity. However, despite what we perceive as "differences," each manuscript can nevertheless present the

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"same" text in a tradition that values multiformity. At the same time, we can nevertheless see that most person references in this passage agree and make use of minimal forms, including pronouns and pronouns embedded within the Hebrew verbs. Thus, it may be the case that the principle of recognition and the principle of minimalization are both met within the tradition, but, since in some ways no person reference is necessarily locally initial in traditional literature, scribes were not required to adhere verbatim to the terms for person reference as they "copied" their *Vorlagen*. Therefore, they continued to prefer subsequent forms for the purpose of minimalization, but also would sometimes use initial forms even in subsequent positions for the purpose of increasing recognition. In the case of Jeremiah of Libnah in 2 Kings 24:18//Jeremiah 52:1, we can see how the reuse of a passage from the book of Kings in the book of Jeremiah could provide an incentive for the "addition" of "of Libnah" in the Jeremiah version. This "addition" increased the likelihood of adequate recognition of Jeremiah of Libnah in the book of Jeremiah, which concerns the prophet, Jeremiah of Anathoth, so that the more minimal, yet synonymous, "Jeremiah [of Libnah]" would not have been misunderstood as "Jeremiah [of Anathoth]."

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